

REMARKS:

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-11. Claims 1, 6 and 9 are amended herein, and new claims 13-15 are added. Support for amendments herein can be found at least on page 73 line 10 through page 75 line 22 of the Specification as filed. No new matter is presented. Withdrawn claim 12 is cancelled herein without prejudice.

Thus, claims 1-11 and 13-15 are pending and under consideration. The rejections are traversed below.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a):

Claims 1-11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,584,466 (Serbinis), "XML: Not a Silver Bullet, But a Great Pipe Wrench" (Usdin) and U.S. Patent No. 6,552,814 (Okimoto).

According to the present invention, when copy is selected on a browser menu screen by a user at the client, the event of copy occurs, and determination of whether the copy is allowed or inhibited is performed based on importance of the document. When the copy is allowed and when the document file includes an overlay tag, overlaid characters are superimposed on the document, and the document including the overlaid characters is printed (see independent claims 1, 6 and 9 and page 73 line 10 to page 75 line 22 of the Specification).

Independent claim 1, by way of example, recites, "documents forming a hierarchical structure comprising an upper hierarchy layer and a lower hierarchy layer ranked below the upper hierarchy layer where document files, each containing a document, in the lower hierarchy are referenced above in the upper hierarchy layer, where the structure is defined with hypertext described in an extensible markup language (XML)."

The invention of claim 1 includes, a printer that makes the hard copy of the document displayed at the client including "overlaid predetermined characters, in response to a tag being included in the management information which instructs to overlay the predetermined characters on the document displayed at the client, when copying is selected at the client, when the document is determined to be printed according to importance thereof, and when the management information includes a tag."

Similarly, claims 6 and 9 recite, "an XML file defining the hierarchical structure by indicating a relation between a document in the upper hierarchy layer and a document in the

lower hierarchy layer, a document type definition file describing information on a version number of each document, and a document style sheet file defining a style of each document.”

Claims 6 and 9 also recite that the management information includes “a tag which instructs to overlay predetermined characters on the document, such that a printer at a client makes a hard copy of the retrieved document including the overlaid characters, when copying is selected at the client, when the document is determined to be printed according to importance thereof, and when the management information includes the tag.”

The hierarchical storage scheme of documents in Serbinis is directed to a collection of document objects (72A and 72B) which represents a generalized high level description of a document and consist of a name for the document, and document instances (73A, 73B and 73C) corresponding to specific instances of that particular document that includes details, reference, state, size and expiry date (see, col. 8, lines 12-39 and Fig. 3). Meaning, Serbinis is limited to file sharing and workflow of an independent document.

The information tables (63) in Serbinis, which the Examiner appears to compare with the claimed management information, is limited to accounting information with entries relating to users registered to access and use the DMS system such as provider identification, pricing plan and billing information (see, col. 7, lines 42-57).

The Examiner acknowledges that Serbinis does not teach or suggest the claimed XML file defining hierarchical structure, the document type and the document style sheet file, but relies on Ustin as teaching the same. Ustin discusses hierarchy within a document and not a hierarchy of documents defining a higher level document in relation to a lower level document and vice versa, as taught by the invention. As explicitly stated in Ustin, “XML data are packaged into document instances (which most non-XMLers would call documents), which consist of a named “root” element which begins at the beginning of the document, contains the entire document, and ends at the end of the document” (see, page 126).

The Examiner asserts that although the combination of Serbinis and Ustin does not teach that “the management information includes a tag which instructs to overlay predetermined characters on the document, such that a printer at a client makes a hard copy of the retrieved document including the overlaid characters”, Okimoto teaches, at col. 5 line 1 to col. 6 line 58, teaches the same.

In Okimoto, as disclosed at col. 5 lines 2 to 56, printing processes are executed based on sets of data series pre-stored as macros in the macro storage unit (19), and these macros

include an overlay macro for forming an overlay image on an original image. A user using the Okimoto system sets a different macro, and the macros are generated by the user by using the printer driver of the computer (20), where each generated macro is assigned with an identification number and stored in the storage unit (19) of the printer (10) and in the HDD (43) of the computer (20). The user can selectively set the first and the second macros for each document set, so that the printer (10) forms the first and the second overlay images.

Accordingly, in Okimoto, the document with overlaid characters is printed when the user selectively sets a macro, and therefore, Okimoto fails to disclose that the printer makes the hard copy of the document including "overlaid characters, when the document is determined to be printed according to importance thereof, and when the management information includes the tag", as taught by the claimed invention.

It is submitted that the independent claims are patentable over the cited references.

For at least the above-mentioned reasons, claims depending from the independent claims are patentably distinguishable over the cited references. The dependent claims are also independently patentable. For example, as recited in claim 3, "said server registers, when a document registered in the document database is updated, the updated document in the document database, and also updates the version number information in the management information related to the document."

The cited references, alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest the above discussed features where the server "registers the updated document in the document database, and also updates the version number information in the management information related to the document", when a document registered in the document database is updated as recited in claim 3.

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

NEW CLAIMS:

New claim 13 recites that the printer makes "the hard copy of the document displayed at the client including overlaid predetermined characters, in response to a tag being included in the management information which instructs to overlay the predetermined characters on the document displayed at the client" and the management information includes information "related to a security level and said server permits or inhibits retrieval of document according to the security level", where the security level is dependent upon "a pertinence determination level based on a predetermined rule."

New claims 14 and 15 also recite, "a tag which instructs to overlay predetermined characters on the document, such that a printer at a client makes a hard copy of the retrieved document including the overlaid characters" and "information related to a security level corresponding to each of the plurality of documents [where] the documents are retrieved from the document database according to a permission of retrieval corresponding to the security level" and the security level depends on "a pertinence determination level based on a predetermined rule."

The cited references, alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest the above-identified features including, "a tag which instructs to overlay predetermined characters on the document" and "information related to a security level" for retrieval of the document database where the security level is based on "a pertinence determination level based on a predetermined rule", as recited in claims 13-15.

Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that new claims 13-15 are patentably distinguishable over the cited references.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

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By: 
Temnit Afework
Registration No. 58,202

1201 New York Avenue, NW, 7th Floor
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 434-1500
Facsimile: (202) 434-1501